

FY2004 WHIP RANKING CRITERIA – CENTRAL AREA WASHINGTON

Applicant Name		Date	
Ranking Individual		Application No.	
Ecological Score		Total Ranking Criteria Score	
Location			
¼ section		Section	
		Township	
		Range	
<p>Applicant Address:</p> <p>Phone: _____ Email: _____</p> <p>Applicant is: Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Operator <input type="checkbox"/> (Operator's Proof of Control attached: YES <input type="checkbox"/>)</p> <p>Applicant eligible under Adjusted Gross Income limit: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (as certified to FSA, per 7 CFR Part 1400)</p> <p>Agreement Type: 5 year <input type="checkbox"/> 10 year <input type="checkbox"/> 15 year <input type="checkbox"/> over 15 year <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Are Applicant and Land Eligible? (See CPM 517.10 and 517.11) YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Local NRCS Contact (Name, Phone and Email):</p> 			
County	FSA Farm Tract No.	Total WHIP Offered Acres	
Habitat Types and Species Information		Offered Acres of Habitat Benefited	
		Upland Acres	
		Wetland Acres	
		Riparian Acres	
		Aquatic (ponds/lakes) Acres	
		Aquatic (streams) Acres	
		T & E Acres	
		Acres of Invasive species controlled or Eradicated	
		Number of T & E species likely to benefit	
Total Estimated Cost			Requested Cost Share Dollars

WHIP Objective:

Describe wildlife habitat resource problems:

Identify Wildlife Species Targeted:

- ☐ Blue Grouse ☐ Chukar ☐ Ring-necked pheasant ☐ **Sage grouse** ☐ **Sharp-tailed grouse**
☐ **Burrowing owl** ☐ **White-headed woodpecker** ☐ Black-tailed jack rabbit ☐ **Pygmy rabbit**
☐ White-tailed jack rabbit ☐ **Western gray squirrel** ☐ Bighorn sheep ☐ Mountain goat
☐ Rocky Mountain elk ☐ Rocky Mountain mule deer ☐ Roosevelt elk

Other targeted species not identified as Central Area WHIP Priority:

Describe habitat restoration needed:

Describe how landowner's objectives contribute to native habitat restoration:

List actions that applicant is requesting cost-share for:

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS			
1. Primary Habitats		325 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY	A. Shrub-steppe	200 points	
	B. Riparian	150 points	
	C. Rural Natural Open Space	100 points	
	D. Snags and Logs	50 points	
2. Restoration of Shrub-steppe		75 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	A. Unfragmented planning area that contains a substantial amount of interior habitat and will resemble the site potential natural community. These are typically, but not limited to, greater than 100 acres.	35 points	
	B. Fragmented planning area that contains isolated units of shrub-steppe. This unit will resemble the site potential natural community when restored. These are typically, but not limited to, less than 100 acres.	20 points	
CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY	C. Greater than 70% native plants, and at least one native shrub	50 points	
	D. Water development needed	10 points	
	E. Located within Pygmy rabbit area	15 points	
	F. Planning area will be protected with fencing or use exclusion	10 points	
3. Restoration of Riparian Areas		75 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY	A. Planning area will be protected with fencing or use exclusion	60 points	
	B. Water source or hydrology will be enhanced or restored	40 points	
	C. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native plants to include trees/shrubs and herbaceous cover	50 point	

4. Restoration of Rural Natural Open Space		75 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	A. Targeted species use planning area, or the planning area is adjacent to open space and is used for breeding or regular feeding; and/or the open space functions as a corridor between essential habitats. These are typically, but not limited to, greater than 5 acres.	30 points	
	B. Targeted species use planning area during part of the year and unit is surrounded by agricultural developments. These are typically, but not limited to, less than 5 acres.	20 points	
CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY	C. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native herbaceous plants.	50 points	
	D. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native herbaceous plants with trees/shrubs.	60 points	
	E. Applicant willing to install food plots with no cost-share	15 points	
	F. Delayed seedbed preparation over winter on agreement area or controlled adjacent field (e.g. corn stubble left over winter)	10 points	
5. Restoration of Snags and Logs		50 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY	G. Snags and Logs habitat will be enhanced to meet FOTG quality criteria	50 points	
6. Enhancement or restoration will result in conversion of cropland, hayland, rangeland, pastureland or grazed woodland to wildlife habitat as the primary land use.		25 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	Cropland or hayland converted to wildlife land as a primary use	25 points	
	Livestock exclusion or management restores grazing land for wildlife (i.e., enhancement of degraded range)	15 points	

7. Disturbance of Habitat		35 points maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	A. Distance to Undisturbed Cover		
	1. Less than 330 feet	15 points	
	2. 330 feet to 660 feet	10 points	
	3. 660 feet to 1320 feet	5 points	
	4. 1320 feet to 2640 feet	3 points	
	5. Greater than 2640 feet	0 points	
CHOOSE ONE	B. Distance to human disturbance		
	1. Less than 330 feet	0 points	
	2. 330 feet to 660 feet	5 points	
	3. 660 feet to 1320 feet	10 points	
	4. 1320 feet to 2640 feet	15 points	
	5. Greater than 2640 feet	20 points	
8. Likelihood of success (based on average ratings from "Likelihood of Success" Worksheet)		10 point maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	A. High – no or few habitat restoration problems during and after the establishment period	10 points	
	B. Medium – moderate problems associated with restoration activity	5-9 points	
	C. Low - High degree of disturbance, competition, indefinite use of irrigation, and/or continued maintenance of structures	<5 points	
Ecological Considerations score			
ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS		10 POINTS MAXIMUM	
9. Cost of practice operation and maintenance (O&M)		10 point maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	A. Low Cost– minimal maintenance after establishment	10 points	
	B. Medium Cost – structures, systems, or plantings require periodic (less than annual) maintenance or replacement	5 points	
	C. High Cost – at least annual maintenance and/or management required	0 point	
Economic score			

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS		10 POINTS MAXIMUM	
10. Education and recreational benefits (public for outdoor recreation site, outdoor classroom, onsite research)		10 point maximum	Applicant's score
CHOOSE ONE	Yes	10 points	
	No	0 points	
Social score			
SCORE SUMMARY			
Ecological Considerations score			
Economic Considerations score			
Social Considerations score			
Total Ranking Score – Maximum score is 185 points			

Central Area WHIP Ranking Criteria Guidelines and Instructions

Total WHIP Offered Acres: Enter acres within proposed WHIP boundary.

Offered Acres of Habitat Benefited: Enter the acres of the habitat type for land included in the WHIP application. Acres may be listed under more than one habitat type. Also identify the acres of invasive species controlled or eradicated and the number of T and E species the WHIP project is likely to benefit. Criterion 1 State Listed and Candidate species are identified by geographic area (WDFW Regions) and by priority area in the following publication:
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phsvert.htm>

Total Estimated Cost: Enter an estimated total cost for implementation of the practices identified in the WHDP. This can be obtained by using the cost list in Section I of the FOTG, or it can be an estimate based on your knowledge.

Estimated Cost Share Dollars: Enter the estimated cost share that the applicant is requesting. This information will be used to determine how many applications NRCS can fund. The actual cost share that the applicant will receive will be as agreed-to in the WHIP Conservation Program Agreement based upon what the applicant determines the actual cost will be.

Ecological Considerations

1. Primary Habitats

Using the following definitions of habitats as described by the WDFW located at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phshabs.htm>, choose which habitats the planning area fits.

A. Shrub-steppe

Category I: Large Tracts: Tracts of land >259 ha (640 ac) consisting of plant communities with one or more layers of perennial grasses and a conspicuous but discontinuous layer of shrubs. Large tracts of shrub-steppe contribute to the overall continuity of the habitat type throughout the region because they are relatively unfragmented, contain a substantial amount of interior habitat, and are in close proximity to other tracts of shrub-steppe. These tracts should contain a variety of habitat features (e.g., variety of topography, riparian areas, canyons, habitat edges, plant communities). Another important component is habitat quality based on the degree with which a tract resembles a site potential natural community, which may include factors such as soil condition and degree of erosion; and distribution, coverage, and vigor of native shrubs, forbs, grasses, and cryptogams.

Category II: Small Tracts: Tracts of land <259 ha (640 ac) with a habitat type consisting of plant communities with one or more layers of perennial grasses and a conspicuous but discontinuous layer of shrubs. Although smaller in size and possibly more isolated from other tracts of shrub-steppe these areas are still important to shrub-steppe obligate and other state-listed wildlife species. Also, important are the variety of habitat features and habitat quality aspects as listed above.

Criteria: Comparatively high fish and wildlife density, high fish and wildlife species diversity, important fish and wildlife breeding habitat, important fish and wildlife seasonal ranges, limited and declining availability, high vulnerability to habitat alteration, unique and dependent species.

B. Riparian

This is the area adjacent to aquatic systems with flowing water that contains elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems which mutually influence each other. In riparian systems, the vegetation, water tables, soils, microclimate, and wildlife inhabitants of terrestrial ecosystems are influenced by perennial or intermittent water. Simultaneously, the biological and physical properties of the aquatic ecosystems are influenced by adjacent vegetation, nutrient and sediment loading, terrestrial wildlife, as well as organic and inorganic debris. Riparian habitat encompasses the area beginning at the ordinary high water mark and extends to that portion of the terrestrial landscape that is influenced by, or that directly influences, the aquatic ecosystem. Riparian habitat includes the entire extent of the floodplain and riparian areas of wetlands that are directly connected to stream courses.

Criteria: High fish and wildlife density, high fish and wildlife species diversity, important fish and wildlife breeding habitat, important wildlife seasonal ranges, important fish and wildlife movement corridors, high vulnerability to habitat alteration, unique or dependent species.

C. Rural Natural Open Space

A priority species resides within or is adjacent to the open space and uses it for breeding or regular feeding; and/or the open space functions as a corridor connecting other *priority habitats*, especially areas that would otherwise be isolated; and/or the open space is an isolated remnant of natural habitat larger than 4 ha (10 acres) and surrounded by agricultural developments. Local consideration may be given to open space areas smaller than 4 ha (10 acres).

Criteria: Comparatively high fish and wildlife density, high fish and wildlife species diversity, important fish and wildlife breeding habitat, important fish and wildlife seasonal ranges, important fish and wildlife movement corridors, high vulnerability to habitat alteration, unique species assemblages in agricultural areas.

D. Snags and Logs

Snags and logs occur within a variety of habitat types that support trees. Trees are considered snags if they are dead or dying and exhibit sufficient decay characteristics to enable cavity excavation/use by wildlife. Priority snags have a diameter at breast height of ≥ 51 cm (20 in) in western Washington and ≥ 30 cm (12 in) in eastern Washington, and are ≥ 2 m (6.5 ft) in height. Priority logs are ≥ 30 cm (12 in) in diameter at the largest end, and ≥ 6 m (20 ft) long. Abundant snags and logs can be found in old-growth and mature forests or unmanaged forests of any age, in damaged, burned, or diseased forests, and in riparian areas. Priority snag and log habitat includes individual snags and/or logs, or groups of snags and/or logs of exceptional value to wildlife due to their scarcity or location in a particular landscape. Areas with abundant, well distributed snags and logs are also considered priority snag and log habitat.

Examples include large, sturdy snags adjacent to open water, remnant snags in developed or urbanized settings, and areas with a relatively high density of snags.

Criteria: Comparatively high fish and wildlife density and species diversity, important fish and wildlife breeding habitat and seasonal ranges, limited availability, high vulnerability to habitat alteration, large number of cavity-dependent species.

2. Restoration of Shrub-steppe

- A. Assign points if unfragmented planning area contains a substantial amount of interior habitat and will resemble the site potential natural community. These are typically, but not limited to, greater than 100 acres. Use the definition for Category I as a guide.
- B. Assign points if fragmented planning area contains isolated units of shrub-steppe. This unit will resemble the site potential natural community when restored. These are typically, but not limited to less than 100 acres. Use the definition for Category II as a guide.
- C. Planting and management shall ensure that there is a mixture of greater than 70% native plants, with at least one native shrub. If no shrubs are planted, reduce score to 25.
- D. Water development needed to meet the water needs of targeted species
- E. Located within Pygmy rabbit area. Use WDFW map, or written certification from qualified WDFW or Tribal Biologist.
- F. Planning area will be protected with fencing or use exclusion for the duration of the WHIP agreement.

3. Restoration of Riparian Areas

- A. Planning area will be protected with fencing or use exclusion for the duration of the WHIP agreement.
- B. Water source or hydrology will be enhanced or restored.
- C. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native plants to include trees/shrubs and herbaceous cover.

4. Restoration of Rural Natural Open Space

- A. Targeted species use planning area, or it is adjacent to open space and is used for breeding or regular feeding; and/or the open space functions as a corridor between essential habitats. These are typically, but not limited to, greater than 5 acres.

- B. Targeted species use planning area during part of the year and unit is surrounded by agricultural developments. These are typically, but not limited to, less than 5 acres.
- C. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native herbaceous plants.
- D. Restoration of vegetation will consist of greater than 70% native herbaceous plants with trees/shrubs.
- E. Applicant willing to install food plots within agreement area with no cost-share
- F. Delayed seedbed preparation over winter on agreement area or controlled adjacent field (e.g. corn stubble left over winter)

5. Restoration of Snags and Logs

- A. Assign points if planning area is in need of snags or log creation to meet the FOTG criteria. The use of [Technical Note Biology-14](#) and [Technical Note Biology-04](#) may be helpful in making that determination.

6. Enhancement or restoration will result in conversion of cropland, hayland, rangeland, pastureland or grazed woodland to wildlife habitat as the primary land use.

- A. Assign points if Cropland or hayland is converted to wildlife land as a primary use.
- B. Assign points if livestock exclusion or management restores land for wildlife (i.e., enhancement of degraded range.)

7. Disturbance of Habitat

- A. Distance to Undisturbed Cover

Measuring from the center of the WHIP planning area, determine the number of feet to undisturbed cover of the quantity and quality needed for the targeted wildlife species.

- B. Distance to human disturbance

Measuring from the nearest human disturbance to the nearest edge of the WHIP planning area, determine the number of feet. Score accordingly. Examples of human disturbance include, but are not limited to; houses, active farm buildings, roads, schools, businesses, etc.

8. Likelihood of success (see attached worksheet - scores based on average of values rated.)

- A. High. No or few habitat restoration problems during and/or after the establishment period. Producer must agree to implement all practices within the first three years of the agreement and this agreement is incorporated into the WHDP. Slight impacts from human disturbance (e.g. no supplemental irrigation water is needed to establish woody plants and/or grasses), passive uses, livestock excluded from WHIP contract area or prescribed grazing being implemented.
- B. Medium. Moderate problems associated with restoration activities. Prescribed grazing plan has to be implemented during contract period. Moderate degree of artificialness. For example: planting native plants that require supplemental water during the establishment period only.

- C. Low. Severe impacts by humans (e.g. livestock grazing without a prescribed grazing plan, or permanent irrigation water is required for plant survival indefinitely.)

Economic Considerations

9. Cost of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of practices.

- A. Low Cost - Minimal maintenance after establishment period.
- B. Medium Cost - Structures requiring periodic (less than annual) maintenance or structure replacement.
- C. High Cost - Structures requiring at least annual maintenance and/or management.

Social Considerations

10. Education and recreational benefits

If the producer agrees to allow educational and recreational activities to occur on the WHIP acres, these points will be awarded. Examples of educational or recreational activities include:

- Research
- Outdoor recreation site, i.e. bird watching
- Outdoor classroom

Notes:

Wetland projects that do not include any other habitat types should be considered for funding under the Wetlands Reserve Program.

Wetland projects that are combined with upland habitat projects can be funded by WHIP if funds are available.

All plantings shall meet the appropriate applicable NRCS standards including wetland habitat management, wetland restoration, wetland establishment, wildlife upland habitat management, tree and shrub planting, etc. If a site already meets the NRCS standard, the offer is not eligible for these points.

Riparian areas are those areas adjacent to a perennial or intermittent stream (dashed blue line on USGS quad map.) Wetlands may be natural or irrigation induced.

WHIP agreement acres cannot be on CRP or WRP acres.

Site restoration must directly benefit recovery or protection of identified species.

All projects must meet the NRCS resource management system level quality criteria for wildlife concerns to be eligible for this program. The use of [Technical Note Biology-14](#) is available for making that determination.

The Area Conservationist may utilize up to 30% of the WHIP allocation to fund special projects not identified in this ranking criteria. This special provision will provide an opportunity to fund projects that are unique and/or where we can participate as project partners with other wildlife agencies or organizations to fund a special project.

WHIP "Likelihood of Success" Evaluation					
Applicant's Name:					
SCORE	IMPEDIMENTS TO SUCCESS AT SITE				
	GROWING CONDITIONS	WEED CONTROL	STRUCTURE UTILIZATION	INVASIVE PLANTS	SITE DISTURBANCE
	Score based on the difficulty of plant establishment due to <u>water</u> and <u>soil</u> needs of plantings, seeds, seedlings, cuttings, or rooted stock selected for the site	Score based on the difficulty of plant establishment and survival due to <u>competition</u> from existing weeds on or adjacent to site.	Score based on the <u>need</u> for man-made structures that must be installed and which may require long term <u>maintenance</u>	Score based on the <u>percentage</u> of the native plant community that occupies the site and will be left intact after removal of invasive plants	Score based on existing and future negative impacts to fish and wildlife habitat caused by <u>livestock</u> presence on site
		<i>Control of invasive or noxious weeds that may hamper site establishment</i>	<i>Degree of artificiality</i>	<i>% intact</i>	<i>Level of disturbance:</i>
10	No supplemental water needed for establishment	Minimal weed control needed on less than 50% of site or, Weed control limited to seedbed preparation	No man-made structures	≥80%	Slight- Livestock exclusion, or prescribed grazing plan in use
5	No supplemental water needed after establishment	Weed control may be needed before and during establishment on 50% or more of site or, Mechanical and chemical controls are needed and provided through establishment	Man-made structures like irrigation systems used during establishment period only or guzzlers that need only periodic maintenance	11-79%	Moderate- Producer agrees to implement prescribed grazing plan on ranch (including WHIP acres) during contract period
0	Irrigation water needed indefinitely	Weed controls needed on 100% of site or, Site is dominated by annual grasses and other weeds that will require long term restoration conversion effort	Yearly maintenance needed (like water control structures)	≤10%	Severe- Livestock grazing without a grazing plan or year long use
	Score = _____	Score = _____	Score = _____	Score = _____	Score = _____

Average Score =

(Enter for question 8 on ranking form)

NOTE: Score only those elements that apply to the applicant's habitat restoration or enhancement project.